Texas employers at forefront of LGBTQ protections

BUSINESS

The Dallas Morning News

Texas' Leading Newspaper $2.00 Dallas, Texas, Monday, December 18, 2017 DALLASNEWS

Tough win

Louis DeLuca/Staff Photographer-

JASON WITTEN did not get the first down he was reaching for, but the Cowboys did get the win they needed Sunday in Oakland to keep their playoff hopes alive. Dallas (8-6) topped the Raiders 20-17, thanks to some crazy plays. **(Coverage, 1C, 4-8C)**

RUSSIA PROBE

GOP ramping up attacks on Mueller

Trump lawyer: Emails improperly obtained by special counsel's office

FROM WIRE REPORTS

WASHINGTON — For much of the seven months since Robert Mueller was appointed special counsel, President Donald Trump's lawyers have stressed their cooperation with him, believing that the more they work with his investigation, the sooner the president will have his name cleared.

But in recent weeks, as the investigation has reached deeper into Trump's inner circle, that image of cooperation has begun to fracture. Trump's lawyers and supporters have significantly increased their attacks on Mueller, especially as the FBI has handed them fresh ammunition to claim that the agents investigating the president may be biased.

The most recent salvos

See **MUELLER'S** Page 3A

Scattered showers

H **60**
L **45**

Metro, back page

NATION

Power outage brings Atlanta airport down

A sudden power outage brought the world's busiest airport to a standstill Sunday, grounding flights in Atlanta just days before the start of the Christmas travel rush. **4A**

Putin phones Trump to thank him for tip

Russian President Vladimir Putin phoned President Donald Trump to thank him for a tip from the CIA that thwarted a terrorist attack being planned in St. Petersburg. **8A**

WORLD

9 killed in Pakistan church attack

At least nine Christian worshippers were killed and 50 wounded when two suicide bombers attacked a church in the southwestern city of Quetta. **10A**

Also: Chileans gave former President Sebastián Piñera a new term in office. **10A**

BUSINESS

Area job gains lead to office boom

As of October, D-FW was the top market in the country for year-over-year employment gains, which has sparked an office boom. **1D**

METRO & STATE

Donations lost in fire replaced threefold

A fire that destroyed a pile of Christmas gifts for needy Dallas families sparked the giving spirit in people who more than made up for the losses. **1B**

Still time to make holiday deadline

While Monday will be the busiest day for U.S. Postal Service workers, it's not too late to get your mail shipped in time. **1B**

INVESTING

Bitcoin boom is greeted with excitement, wariness

Karen Robinson-Jacobs/Staff

Bitcoin enthusiasts including Fred Constantinesco (second from right) and Stephen Paul Ellis (holding glass) talked about the future of the digital currency at a recent Meetup gathering at the Quarter Bar in Dallas.

Local advocates ride the wave while skeptics talk of a bubble

By KAREN ROBINSON-JACOBS
Staff Writer
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BITCOIN is an investment you should miss, says Michelle Singletary. **1D**

Fred Constantinesco hardly ever stopped smiling.

More than four dozen professionals, gathered recently at a meeting Constantinesco convened, were in animated chatter about bitcoin — the world's most popular digital currency.

It was a stark contrast from the event's early days, way back in 2015.

Then, often the only person who would listen to his beliefs about bitcoin was Jenny the bartender at the Quarter Bar in Uptown.

"I was by myself for weeks," said Constantinesco, 31, sporting a bitcoin T-shirt. "Then one person came. Then two and three.

"And then last summer, we had a high of like *seven* people," he said, leaning in enthusiastically. "I'm like, 'Yes, we made it.' This year it's been insane. There's been anywhere from 30 to 40 to come. You get a lot of new people."

Constantinesco's group is part of a growing "cryptocurrency ecosystem" in North Texas that includes die-hards and newbies, consultants, college-campus clubs and speculators.

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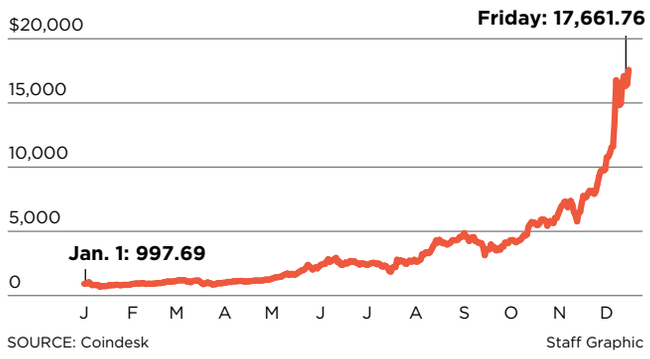
Bitcoin boom

The cryptocurrency has shot up nearly 2,000 percent since the beginning of the year.



SOURCE: Coindesk Staff Graphic

WASHINGTON

Cruz taking team stance

He's worked closely with GOP colleagues to advance tax reform

By TOM BENNING
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WASHINGTON — Texas Sen. Ted Cruz is not getting the flat tax he's long desired.

Or even a reduction in the number of tax brackets. Or the elimination of the estate tax and some other parts of the code the Republican loathes. Or the fulfillment of his stated goal of "cutting taxes for every taxpayer in America."

BUSY week for Congress. **6A**

TAX plan fact check. **6A**

And yet, when a lone GOP senator last month threatened to scuttle the party's $1.5 trillion tax plan, it wasn't the Texan once famous for helping shut down the government over ideological purity.

"It's counterproductive for any of us to be drawing red lines," he said in an interview with *The Dallas Morning News*.

That Cruz is all-in on a revamp that achieves only some — but not all — of his most fervent policy goals offers fresh proof of his recent focus on building coalitions rather than busting them up.

He hasn't been shy about "working very hard" in the

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NIGER

U.S. soldier shot 18 times, fought to the end after ambush

Investigation shows Sgt. La David Johnson was not captured alive

FROM WIRE REPORTS

LA DAVID JOHNSON

WASHINGTON — Army Sgt. La David Johnson died in a hail of gunfire, hit as many as 18 times as he took cover in thick brush, fighting to the end after fleeing militants who had just killed three comrades in an October ambush in Niger, The Associated Press has learned.

A military investigation has concluded that Johnson wasn't captured alive or killed at close range, dispelling a swirl of rumors about how he died.

The report has determined that Johnson, 25, of Miami Gardens, Fla., was killed by enemy rifle and machine gun fire from members of an Islamic State offshoot, according to U.S. officials familiar with the findings. The Oct. 4 ambush took place about 120 miles north of Niamey, the African nation's capital. Johnson's body was recovered two days later.

U.S. officials familiar with the findings spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity to describe details of an investigation that has not been finalized or publicly released.

A 12-member Army special forces unit was accompanying 30 Nigerien forces when they were attacked in a densely wooded area by as many as 50 militants traveling by vehicle and carrying small arms and rocket-propelled grenade launchers.

Johnson was struck as many as 18 times from a distance by a volley of machine gun rounds, according to the U.S. officials, who said he was firing back as he and two Nigerien soldiers tried to escape.

All told, four U.S. soldiers and four Nigerien troops were killed in the ambush. Two U.S. and eight Nigerien troops were

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